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UNCLAS HARARE 001275

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/S (KRAFT), AF/PD (COX AND ROBERTSON)

NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER

LONDON FOR GURNEY

PARIS FOR NEARY

NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PHUM KPAO ZI

SUBJECT: "STANDARD" EDITOR ARRESTED FOURTH TIME

¶1. On May 28 Bornwell Chakaodza, editor of the independent weekly "Standard" was arrested for the fourth time in less than two weeks. As has become customary, Chakaodza was picked up by police at his office, taken to Harare Central police station, and charged with violating Section 80 l.b. of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act" (AIPPA). That section of AIPPA deal with "abusing journalistic privileges" by "publishing falsehoods. "Standard" entertainment editor Fungayi Kanyuchi was also arrested on May 28 on the same charges. The May 28 arrest was Kanyuchi's third in 12 days. Both journalists were released after being charged and posting bail. Neither was mistreated.

¶2. According to the paper's lawyer, the May 28 arrests were for a column Kanyuchi wrote about the jail conditions he experienced when he was arrested with Chakaodza on May 16.

¶3. Chakaodza's previous arrests were on May 16, 22 and 23. The sustained harassment of Chakaodza and his staff continues to bleed the "Standard" of time and money for bail and lawyers, but has also become a perverse point of pride for the paper. Chakaodza and his colleagues remain upbeat and determined to continue publishing stories they believe to be true and in the public interest.

SULLIVAN